BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 08631 179 0

Accessions 131,225 Shelf No. 75H1.179

Received Aug. 30, 1872

Heliotype Printing Co.

Pth. covers. From 7441.50.2

charged on 1 vol

SERVICES

AT THE

7521.179

ORDINATION OF MR. JAMES DE NORMANDIE,

IN PORTSMOUTH, N.H., OCTOBER 1, 1862.

SERMON

BY REV. EZRA S. GANNETT,

PASTOR OF ARLINGTON-STREET CHURCH, BOSTON.

WITH

CHARGE, RIGHT HAND, AND ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

BOSTON:
WALKER, WISE, AND COMPANY.
PORTSMOUTH:
JAS. F. SHORES, JR., AND JOS. HILLER FOSTER.
1862.

SERVICES

AT THE

ORDINATION OF MR. JAMES DE NORMANDIE,

IN PORTSMOUTH, N.H., OCTOBER 1, 1862.

SERMON

BY REV. EZRA S. GANNETT,

PASTOR OF ARLINGTON-STREET CHURCH, BOSTON.

WITH

CHARGE, RIGHT HAND, AND ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

BOSTON:
WALKER, WISE, AND COMPANY.
PORTSMOUTH:
JAS. F. SHORES, JR., AND JOS. HILLER FOSTER.
1862.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF JOHN WILSON AND SON,
5, WATER STREET.

B.H.
131.235
Aug. 30, 1872.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE ordination of Mr. JAMES DE NORMANDIE, as Pastor of the South Parish in Portsmouth, N.H., took place at the Stone Church in that city, on Wednesday, Oct. 1, 1862.

At the Ordaining Council, convened at the chapel previous to the public services, about twenty churches were represented by pastor or delegate, or both.

After the public services, — of which a list is printed at the end of this pamphlet, — the pastors and delegates, by invitation of the Parish Committee, partook of a dinner at the Rockingham House.

To this entertainment they were welcomed by the Chairman of the Parish Committee — SAMUEL LORD, Esq. — as follows: —

"The South Parish welcomes to the present festival the representatives of the Churches who have assisted us in the ordination of a new pastor.

"This Parish, within the present century, has made but two previous calls upon the Churches for Ordination Councils; nor would they now have summoned you together, had not our University called upon us to transfer our parochial connections with our late pastor to them, for the public good.

"The ordination council and the officiating clergy will please to receive the thanks of the Parish for their presence and services this day.

"The Parish would proffer double thanks to the successor of Dr. Channing for this his second * Ordination Sermon; and would assure him, that the principles of the departed expounder of our faith are held by us not only in remembrance, but in possession.

"Once more, we bid you welcome; and the new trust, this day committed to the Parish by the Churches, we hope to hold, unless the higher organizations of Religion and Learning shall call upon us for another sacrifice."

---

* Dr. GANNETT preached the Sermon on the occasion of Dr. PEABODY'S ordination, — twenty-nine years before.

SERMON.

"A GOOD MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST, NOURISHED UP IN THE WORDS OF FAITH AND OF GOOD DOCTRINE, WHEREUNTO THOU HAST ATTAINED."

1 Timothy iv. 6.

A FEW days more will complete the twenty-ninth year since a minister was ordained over this religious society. According to the fashion of the times, it is a long period for one person to have held this relation unbroken. Few in any generation are so happy as to fill the ministerial office, for this length of time, with a satisfaction on the part of both pastor and people, which is lessened only when his removal to a position of still wider usefulness becomes so plain a duty, that neither party can fail to acknowledge the propriety of a separation perhaps equally painful to both. A most unreasonable parish, indeed, would this have been, if its members had shown any discontent with the ministry which for nearly thirty years it was their privilege to enjoy; but faithfulness of service, and constancy of regard, had been elements in their parochial history from the first. If we may make past habits a ground of expectation for the future, the friend who to-day is authorized to call this pulpit his own need not fear lest he be permitted only to spend a

few unsatisfactory years with an inattentive or capricious people. We rejoice with him in the prospect of happy and long-continued service in this pleasant home.

Within the last quarter of a century, a change in the tenure of the ministry is not the only one that we are called to notice or lament. Among the changes to which the public taste has consented, or which it has been instrumental in producing, the character of the preaching common in our pulpits presents an example that suggests grave considerations, and may involve serious consequences. In some of its qualities, the preaching of the present day will doubtless bear a favorable comparison with that with which the last generation was familiar. Having less precision and less commonplace, it has more of earnestness, variety, life, and relation to the actual experience of men; is less professional in its tone, less technical in its terms; and, though perhaps less instructive, is more a reflection and an encouragement of the enterprise which marks both the thought and the action of the times. In one respect, however, the difference is not in favor of the present period. Preaching is less doctrinal than it was. Taken in one of the senses in which we may construe this term, we might find reason to congratulate ourselves that we have escaped from a habit of former days. If doctrinal must mean either controversial or dogmatic, then, though a little of such preaching may be beneficial, yet, like the rod of the schoolmaster or the spur of the equestrian, it should seldom come into use. But these two mistakes — one more common with the people, who understand by a doctrinal discourse an assault upon the

opinions of some section of the Church; the other an error of the minister, who substitutes assertion for instruction — lie outside the path along which the preacher may, and, if he would do the most good, must, lead his hearers. Doctrinal preaching is the exposition of positive spiritual truths. It differs, therefore, from what is usually called practical preaching, or an enforcement of the preceptive parts of religion; though, under a more correct appreciation, doctrinal preaching bears the same relation to practical as the planting of the tree to the culture of fruit. It differs also from sentimental preaching, or a weak dilution of truth in pretty phrases. It differs from rhetorical preaching, or an exhibition of electro-plated ware for solid silver. It differs from all preaching but gospel preaching: which indeed it is, preeminently and exclusively; for its purpose is, to unfold the glad news of redemption and life which the Son of God brought from the bosom of Infinite Love. It is such preaching as we find in those discourses of Jesus, which John, the most doctrinal of the Evangelists, has given us. It is such a style of preaching as both the Acts and the Epistles show that Paul adopted, and such as he recommended to Timothy in his description of "a good minister of Jesus Christ," as one "nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine;" for although the original word for "doctrine," in our text, may mean instruction in its largest sense, commentators agree in giving it in this passage a narrower signification.

Let us mark its proper force. What are the doctrines of Christianity? Without yet specifying them, our

general answer would be, They are the truths which Christianity makes prominent and essential, — prominent in the place they hold, and essential in the influence they exert. They are the great spiritual revelations of the Gospel. Theoretically, they constitute the substance of the Gospel; experimentally, they denote its effect. They are worthy, therefore, of being described in terms which believers have been fond of using. They are the "doctrines of grace," or declarations setting forth the character and conditions of the Divine favor; "doctrines of the cross," or truths of which the cross of Christ is at once the symbol and the assurance; "doctrines of salvation," or indications of the method by which man may be rescued from the peril into which sin has cast him. These are appropriate and excellent terms to use in this connection. Perverted as they have been to designate statements that make salvation a mystery, the cross a means of extricating the Supreme Being from a dilemma, and grace the title of immoral partiality, we have been inclined to let them fall into neglect. Would it not be better to re-instate them in the possession of their true meaning? In the interpretation which we give to the Gospel, they find their just value; and we, of all Christians in the world, have a right to use them. The salvation of man, the cross of Christ, the grace of God, are themes on which our preachers should discourse; for they alone can show the actual relations which these themes hold to each other.

Now, the point which seems to me to demand attention at this time, and to which the present service may justly call attention, is the propriety of doctrinal preaching;

and of more of such preaching than, as I apprehend, is common among us. Its importance is obvious, from the fact that Christian truth is the root of Christian character, or the basis of a good life. Some persons rely on habit, and some on the pressure of society, to keep them right; but social pressure is not always in the right direction, and habit is not a law to the mind, but a constraint, more mechanical than moral, on the conduct. Some preachers trust very much to an excitement of the feelings; but the feelings are blind forces, if not governed by principle. Some place their chief confidence in intuitive perceptions; but, if these perceptions have the distinctness and authority claimed for them, there was little need of a special mission from Heaven to earth. Some insist on the supremacy of moral convictions: but moral convictions do not necessarily, nor of their own proper force would they, make a man religious or spiritually minded; in other words, they could not enable him to realize the highest excellence. Others still confine themselves to a homiletic exposition of duty; but how can we raise the conscience out of the mire of self-indulgence, unless, to borrow the language of Mechanics, we get a purchase by means of the truth which we shall use as a lever? Whatever other kind of sermon may be useful, the sermon which treats of Christian doctrine is indispensable in the proper discharge of ministerial duty; and every other sermon will lean back on this as its support. Men are too apt to forget that character must have a foundation. It cannot stand upon air, nor rest on a cloud. And, just as granite is a better foundation for a house than wood or earth, sound Chris-

tian doctrine is a better substratum for character than any system of religious belief which originates with man.

It is a peculiarity of the Gospel, that it offers no systematic exposition of truth. In Confessions of faith for adults, and in Catechisms for children, doctrines are arranged according to some presumed law of logical or spiritual sequence. Such arrangement may have its advantages for the memory; but it represents the Gospel, as nearly as a Concordance represents the New Testament: the Bible words are there, but not in their natural or legitimate connections. Christ did not aim at making men profound theologians. Theology as a science lies scattered through the Bible very much as the precious stones in the breastplate of the Jewish high-priest were once scattered among the treasures of nature. Brought together, and set each in its place, they represent and reflect the Divine Will; yet the arrangement is artificial and provisional. The everlasting truths which Jesus delivered dropped from his lips, one might say on the first perusal, incidentally, as if without either plan or forethought; although a closer examination will discover a pertinency which connects the occasion with the speech, and causes the former to become a means of elucidating the latter. Even Paul, scholar and dialectician as he was, never attempts to reduce Christianity to a system: it is his commentators who have introduced scientific analysis into the Epistle to the Romans.

In any attempt which we make to define the truths of our religion, we should be guided by two rules, which have been strangely overlooked. One of these rules

obliges us to seek the Christian doctrines among the plain instructions of Christ. They are not matters of inference, but of revelation; not the back-ground of obscure hints, but the substance of positive instruction. A doctrine which cannot be presented in Christ's words is not a part of his Gospel. Nothing but the disregard of this law of inquiry by the Christian Church prevents our pronouncing it an axiom which no one could dispute. To accept Christ as the great Teacher of mankind, and at the same time to impose on the world a religious belief which cannot be expressed in his words, is gross practical inconsistency, and almost a contradiction in terms. Essential truth was not left to be ingeniously deduced from what he taught; still less is it a reconciliation of opposite statements which he made: for one of these suppositions imputes to him an erroneous, and the other an insufficient, discharge of the office with which he was intrusted when he was sent to "bear witness to the truth." If Christ did not teach enough for the soul to know, no one is competent, or ever has been competent, to add the needful instruction; and, if he did teach enough, other instruction is not needed. Whichever part of the alternative we take, we are debarred from a resort to inferential divinity; our only resource being that with which Peter was more than content, — "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

The other condition of successful inquiry after Christian doctrine limits us to such truths as contain a spiritual efficacy, by which the character may be quickened and purified. For the object of Christ's ministry was, not to

supply the believer with intellectual furniture, but to endow the soul with the energies of religious life. A revelation that should not touch the conscience nor mould the will did not fall within the purpose of his mission. His silence on many questions which men are eager to propound may be explained by this fact. How little, for example, do we know of the future world, beyond the momentous disclosures of immortality and judgment! Thousands confess their disappointment and impatience at this silence by the delight they take in fictitious description. Yet is it not plain, that it would have helped us but little, in our present struggle with evil, to have been told all that we desire to know about the nature of angels or the employments of beatified spirits? and is it not probable, that therefore we are taught no more? The Gospel was not given to satisfy an unprofitable curiosity, however natural or innocent. The end of faith is a spiritual consciousness. "Sanctify them by thy truth," was the prayer of Jesus.

The two conditions which we have now laid down enable us to discriminate between the Divine and the human, the true and the conjectural. They justify us in resisting any attempt to impose on our belief statements which multitudes accept. We provide, not an ingenious yet inadequate defence, but a fair and full protection of our incredulity, when we demand of the advocates of the doctrine of the Trinity, that they present, at least, one form of that doctrine in the words of Christ; or when we challenge the believers in natural depravity to show how such a dogma can give impulse or aid to a soul seeking, or needing redemption. For the sake of dis-

crimination, we urge the importance of considering the method and design, as well as the contents, of Christ's instruction. It is not a proclivity towards unbelief, but a desire for right belief, that induces us to reject popular creeds, and open the way to a sound faith. Under the countenance of a Scriptural example, we "take away the first, that we may establish the last."

We wish, by these arguments and explanations, to recover for doctrinal Christianity the estimation to which it is entitled. We wish that an acquaintance with this aspect of the Gospel should result from a study of the New Testament. We wish, moreover, that the soul should convert such an acquaintance into the nourishment of its own life by spiritual assimilation; and we wish that preaching should endeavor to promote such an acquaintance. A restoration of doctrinal Christianity to its rightful place in the preparations of the minister for his pulpit, is the great reform which the exigencies and the obligations of our position in the Christian Church require us to adopt. The press has given us two books, bearing somewhat similar titles, — one, "Restatements of Christian Doctrine;" the other, "A Reconstruction of Biblical Theories," — the former volume as remarkable for characteristic ability as the latter for frank audacity. Neither the one nor the other, certainly not the more radical of the two, aims at precisely the result which I contemplate. It is not the reproduction alone of truth for men to consider, but the recovery of its influence through a more authoritative promulgation from the pulpit, that I account the great want of our times. This want, our political troubles, instead of overshadow-

ing or putting in abeyance, make more distinct and immediate: for, whether we desire to gain a higher atmosphere of thought in which our souls may find relief from the burthen that weighs on them, or to draw from the Gospel the counsel and strength which shall fit us to bear our part in the offices of the hour, there never has been a time, in human history, when the vital doctrines of the Gospel had a larger opportunity to prove their value; there never has been a time, when the preaching of these truths could have done more good, alike in raising the mind above the influence of earthly circumstances, and in preparing it to meet those circumstances with a brave and hopeful energy. What we need to-day, our children will also need under the very different circumstances which, we trust, will mark their entrance on the duties of citizenship; and all future generations will need under the various conditions of political and social life through which they may pass; until the day shall come, promised long ago, but still beheld afar off, when the Gospel shall have brought every social institution and all personal experience within its beneficent control. As in past ages and as now, so through future time, the disinthralment of society from error, as well as the deliverance of the soul from sin, must be the work of those agencies which faith in Christ shall put in motion: not a faith in the letter of his history, which alone sets nothing in motion; but faith in him as the Teacher, Redeemer, and Lord, whose words must be accepted as the quickening forces of humanity.

For a recovery of its just position by religious truth, both the nature and the influence of the Christian doc-

trines must be properly understood. Before we turn our attention particularly upon these two points, let me anticipate the influence of a style of remark not uncommon among us, by which many persons are led away from an intelligent faith. It is said that moral sympathy with Christ is an equivalent expression for the effect of his religion, and that this sympathy is at once means and end in the development of the Christian character. Now, it would be wrong to deny that affinities may grow up between the soul and Christ, by which it shall be made to bear his image, without a sharply defined doctrinal belief. But these affinities are either the product of incipient convictions, upon which they re-act to confirm and enlarge them; or, in those cases in which Christ approaches the soul by the avenue of sympathy alone, the moral judgment accepts his instruction, and stability of character is secured through consent of the mind; the thoughts and apprehensions in this way becoming loyal to him, as well as the sensibilities. Much that is repeated about "the spirit" of Christ is unsatisfactory, if not delusive. By disregarding the connection between the spirit and the truth, we may lose both. The fragrance of the flower, or the perfume from the drug, when extracted, escapes, unless combined with a protective basis. Piety without faith, or goodness without belief, is a separation of the effect from the cause, so anomalous as to be monstrous.

Such a use of religious truths as it should be the object of the ministry to encourage might require an entire reconstruction of Christian theology. The cornerstone of the theological systems, which different sections

of the Church have erected as citadels of faith, has been some attribute of the Divine Nature, — the sovereignty, for example, or the goodness, of God; and the apex has been found either in the glory of God, or in the ultimate well-being of his universe. Using these as the initial and final statements, it became necessary to adjust all intermediate truths with a reference to such boundaries; and Christian doctrines have, in the main, been formulas meant to express the mysteries of the Divine government. With equal reverence and gratitude, let us take up the privilege of maintaining, that the Gospel does not enter on so fruitless a task. It treats of matters more nearly level with the human consciousness. Its cornerstone is human want; its apex, everlasting life. A correct understanding of the Gospel would compel us, therefore, if bent upon framing its truths into a system, to adopt a different "scheme of divinity" from any which is, or ever has been, popular. Taking our position, not in the skies, but on the earth, we interpret Christianity as the law and the inspiration of a healthful consciousness. The first duty of the Christian minister, after having himself "attained unto the words of faith and of sound doctrine," is to lay this interpretation of the Gospel before his people in the plainest, yet most persuasive, terms which he can borrow from his own interior life.

Under such an interpretation, what will be the constituent members of doctrinal Christianity? By way of illustration rather than enumeration, let me give a partial answer to this inquiry.

In the front rank of Christian truths, foremost in the noble company, I find a doctrine concerning mediation.

It is a doctrine of wide significance. It involves a view of the relations which exist between God and man, and of the place which Christ holds in the midst of these relations. It presents God as at once righteous and merciful; "just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus;" sinned against, yet patient with the transgressor; forsaken by them who live only through his watchful care, still yearning after their repentant submission, and ready to forgive those whose hearts are broken in contrite grief; "commending his love to us, in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us." It presents man as lying in a state of moral ruin, yet capable of moral renovation; weak, wilful, corrupt, self-betrayed, lost, yet stung by conscience, and weary in heart; with powers and affections estranged from God, but restless in their departure from him. It presents Christ as the instrument chosen to bring men back to obedience; the Messenger, whom Divine Grace qualified for a work which no other being was competent to execute; the Instructor and Saviour of the human race, the pledge of mercy, the channel of truth, the inspirer of hope, the reconciling agency between the soul and its Maker, the "Sent" of God, the "Mediator." What a breadth of truth is covered by this doctrine! What depths of experience, what heights of aspiration, does it disclose! In what a clear light does it set the fact of the atonement, which men have so sadly misused, first by calling it a doctrine, and then by torturing and overlaying it; till the "atonement" of the Church has resembled the "atonement" of the New Testament as little as engravings that you may have seen of the temple at Jerusalem, in which

the principles of art and the traditions of history are treated with equal scorn, resemble the original structure. The atonement is the great central fact of the believer's life, for which his previous experience has been a mournful preparation, but of which his subsequent experience is a joyful result,— the conquest of the human will by the Divine love, and the seal of the Saviour's mediatorial work. Let not any man add unto it what does not belong to it, lest God "add unto him the plagues" of a darkened mind and diseased conscience; let no man take away from it any part of its meaning, lest God "take away his part out of the book of life."

The next doctrine in order of importance — for a just arrangement of Christian truths must be founded on their relative spiritual value — is a doctrine respecting the sons of God. Like that of which we have just spoken, this also has a large range of meaning. Like that, it involves a revelation concerning God and Christ and man. It exhibits God in the relation of a Father; for, if there be "sons of God," he must have granted to some of his creatures the privilege of calling him "Father." But to whom? Not to the whole world, except as they may choose to put themselves in a filial relation. The more I study the New Testament, the more am I inclined to restrict the revelation of "the Father." Christ makes him known, under this title, to such as through faith become children of God. To those whom he addressed as "the light of the world" and "the salt of the earth," or to the representatives of his future Church, Jesus gave permission to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven." Practically, at least, the paternal character of God can be

a revelation only to those who have entered into spiritual union with Christ. "If ye had known me," were his words, "ye should have known my Father also." To those who are sons, the Gospel unfolds the parental attributes of the Divine Mind; and the Infinite One, clothed with majesty and girded with power, becomes the most tender and intimate of personal friends. Look, now, on the other side of this relation. Frail and sinful man becomes a child of God. "Hast made us unto our God kings and priests" is the language in which the saints celebrate the praises of the Redeemer, under the Oriental imagery of the Apocalypse; but it is a nearer, and therefore a more glorious, relation to hold, which we claim as sons. "The spirit of adoption" which we have "received" lifts us, if we may so speak, out of the arms of a Providence fearful, if faithful, to lay us on the bosom of a heavenly grace; while it informs us of the design of that Providence in chastening us, even that we may become "partakers" of the holiness which constitutes the essential quality of the Divine Nature. This doctrine of sonship includes yet more; for it instructs us concerning him who was the "well-beloved Son," and who is "not ashamed to call them who are sanctified brethren," since he also was "sanctified and sent into the world" by the Father. On this ground, as you remember, he rested his justification in calling himself "the Son of God." If men, instead of seeking for the import of this title among inscrutable mysteries of an antecedent state of being, had accepted the definition which lies on the very surface of the Gospel, how much angry debate and how much secret distress would have been avoided!

One other example let me give of the contents of doctrinal Christianity. Distinct and bright on the pages of the New Testament stands the doctrine of eternal life. Here, again, we throw open to the believer a boundless field of experience. No word is entitled to bear a greater weight of meaning than this monosyllabic "life;" yet, till Christ raised it into a true appreciation, how little did it signify! Even now, in lands on which the light of the Gospel has not fallen, in Pagan or Mohammedan countries, how little value is set upon human life! Christ augmented the force of the term immeasurably, both by showing what life might be made here, and by announcing its continuance hereafter. As a present possession, life becomes invaluable, when seen to be, internally, a consciousness of spiritual relations; and, externally, a discharge of duties, which, however mean to a worldly eye, are glorified by their connection with character. Nothing now is ignoble, except that which conscience brands as unworthy. Whatever it is right for a man to do, in princely apparel or in peasant's dress, is honorable and holy work. At one blow did this interpretation of life strike down the artificial barriers and false judgments of society. Understood as the pursuit of excellence or as the normal growth of the soul, life is an equal privilege, and therefore an equal trust, for all. Royalty is but the pressure of a heavier obligation, while slavery is a denial of personal rights; selfishness is suicide; and love, the fulness of satisfaction. Under the influence of such ideas, regeneration, the new birth, is relieved of all technical or dogmatic obscurity, and appears in its true character, as the entrance of a human

soul into a consciousness of it own powers and destinies. The Saviour's words, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven," become the statement of a law as intelligible as it is inevitable. Still, Christianity does not stop, in its explanation of "life," at the boundary of our present state of being. By carrying forward the term into an unseen world, and there investing it with imperishable associations, that it may return into our use as a symbol of immortality, the Gospel has made it the most comprehensive of the terms of human speech. While the revelation of immortality is justly regarded as one of the peculiar features of the Gospel, the form in which this revelation is made is not less worthy of notice. It is not a naked annunciation of another state of being, but a continual recognition of the indestructible qualities of the life which Christ has quickened in the soul, and which is one and the same through all stages of existence. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die," is his promise of immortality to man.

If Christianity had paused at this point, however, it would have failed to add the sanction which is needed for the support of a struggling virtue, or the warning which may deter the sinner from fatal perseverance in the course he has chosen. There is one other doctrine of our religion, which I may not leave unnoticed, — the doctrine of retribution; which unfolds the influence of each moment on the next moment, of each period of our mortal existence on the subsequent periods, and of the whole of this life on an endless futurity. If there be any thing positive in the Gospel, it is the declaration that

man is living under a judgment, which never relaxes its vigilance, nor suspends its retributive function; a judgment, for the rectitude and constancy of which the Divine attributes are a security, and the nature of which Christ has set forth, now in the unequivocal terms in which its principles are announced, and now by the terrific images in which its effects are described. Having the same foundation and the same altitude, this doctrine, and that which we last considered, stand as the pillars on which the portals of eternity are hung; through which, as faith forces them open, light from the sovereign throne streams out, and falls on every act of our mortal being.

I may not try your patience by any further description of the doctrinal basis on which Christianity would raise the fabric of character. Under these four titles, we have indicated the most important portion of the contents of the Gospel; for the value of the truths which it delivers is not numerical, but moral. It is not by quantity, but by quality, that we estimate the water of which "he who drinketh shall never thirst again." In avoiding the usual titles, as well as the usual arrangement, of the Christian doctrines, I cannot expect an instant concurrence, especially from those on whose minds the "Lectures on Christian Doctrine," which it was their privilege to hear from the pulpit before they were given to the public, must have left a permanent impression; yet I am constrained to think that the author of this volume, as well as he to whom we are indebted for the "Restatements" to which I have already alluded, may be ready to admit that a disposition of the cardinal truths of revelation in the order to which I have given preference is recom-

mended by its parallelism with the purposes which Christ came to effect. The mistake of theologians of almost every school has been, to take their standpoint outside these purposes, and construct their systems from a position at which the Christian truths do not appear in their natural relations. Christ did not come upon earth to unfold a theology of the universe, or to solve the problems which vex a student, and which lie as far behind human want as above human intelligence; but to meet the actual condition of humanity, with remedies and aids suited to this end. We shall be in the best situation for tracing the internal economy of his religion, if we place ourselves where he stood when he cried, "Repent; for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." You observe that the Gospel did not begin with a doctrine about the mode of the Divine being, or the origin of human sinfulness; but with a recognition of the fact that man was a sinner, and a promise that God would draw the penitent soul into union with himself. Here should our exposition of Christianity begin, — in the mediatorial work of reconciliation between a miserable sinner and a gracious God; and thence, through personal verification of the doctrines of sonship, eternal life, and spiritual judgment, pass to the final cry of the believer, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory."

Through personal verification; that is, through such an acquaintance of the soul with these doctrines as shall render them elements of its consciousness, and conditions of its history. I have said that not only the nature, but the influence, of Christian truth must be understood, if we would see it restored to its rightful position, either

in the regards of men or in the offices of the pulpit, — in the prayers, as well as the sermons, by which the minister shall lead his people towards the "end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls." This influence is neither mechanical nor intellectual nor ethical, but spiritual and experimental. Religious truth may be received either historically, when it is deposited in the memory; or intellectually, when it is lodged in the understanding; or spiritually, when it is embraced by the soul. In the first case, words alone are held by an act of faith; in the second case, ideas; in the third, vital forces, of which words are signs in the memory, and ideas in the understanding, but signs which, whether in word or in idea, are useful only as they induce the soul to entertain such forces within its own life. The excellence of preaching depends on its fidelity in rendering assistance to the soul in its acquisition of this benefit: in other words, a good sermon is that which brings the truth into connection with the innermost consciousness of the hearer. A sermon that shall simply repeat or coldly expound the truths of the Gospel may not be worthless; but such sermons alone, though preached through all the Sundays of all the years of the longest ministry that ever turned a pulpit from its legitimate uses, would not secure one soul as the seal of that life-long ministry. No, never; although the preacher should have learned all that Aristotle could teach him of logic, or Cicero of eloquence. Doctrinal Christianity must be so used by the speaker, that it shall strike upon the spiritual nature of the hearer. Religion addresses itself to the religious faculties and sensibilities, not to the critical understand-

ing or the captious taste. If these choose to lend it their support by entering into its service, so much more easy will it be for religion to transform the sinner into a saint; but, competent to effect this transformation without their aid, by too great reliance on their support it destroys its own ability. The aim of the preacher, and the aim of a good minister in his private intercourse with the members of his congregation, should be to implant truth in the conscience and heart, and in the deeper sanctity of that province of our nature where the exercises of spiritual communion are conducted, and the soul vindicates its right to appropriate to itself the apostle's words, "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

Of that doctrinal Christianity, for a delineation of which I have endeavored to furnish some hints, let me say, that, as it can be really understood only through conversion into personal experience, it demands such an interpretation as we give it, on account of its fitness to combine with the wants and energies of the soul; sustaining, while it directs, the latter, and relieving, while it explains, the former. Take any one, or all, of the articles of the popular theology; extract the marrow of the Westminster Assembly's Catechism, — that marvellous preparation of unintelligible dogma and arrogant assertion, — and discover, if you may, any peculiar adaptation to the necessities of the soul. Plants, it is said, grow towards the light. Did a human soul ever show a spontaneous tendency towards the doctrine of unconditional election? "Three persons in the Divine Nature, constituting a Trinity in unity:" repeat that formula to

one who comes to you for spiritual counsel, and let the effect indicate its value as a stimulus or a solace. Put either of the truths which we have been examining to the same test; repeat the Scriptural formulas, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through him;" — "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life," — and the response of every soul, eager to catch the sound of a voice laden with pertinent words, would prove the suitableness of the genuine Gospel to man's actual want.

Since this Gospel has so close a relation to the needs of the interior life, the folly and wickedness of reducing it to a verbal faith are palpable. If the minister should avoid this error in his treatment of Divine truth, the people should be not less careful in their use of it. Let it ever be borne in mind, that we can apprehend the character or value of Christianity, only as we take it into our consciousness. Experience alone will enable us to understand the offices of Christ, or the privileges of discipleship. Not more true is it that only a mother can know a mother's love, than that none but a soul which has found peace can know "the peace that passeth understanding." "Our Father, who art in heaven," is an empty phrase to him who has not a filial heart; but to him who has become as a little child, oh, what inexhaustible treasures of grace are thrown open by such a revelation of God! "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin:" what is this declaration but diplomatic cipher, Egyptian hieroglyphics, an algebraic

unknown quantity, to one who has not been washed in that blood? but, to him who has felt its purifying and strengthening influence, the words denote an operation which no wealth could procure, and for which no gratitude is an equivalent. Unless personal consciousness interpret the religion of the New Testament, its truths will have no more efficacy than the Koran or the Vedas. "No man," we are told, "could learn the new song that was sung before the throne, but the hundred and forty and four thousand who were redeemed from the earth."

Christianity differs from other religions which have obtained a temporary or permanent influence, in the opportunity it enjoys of using the example of him, by whom it was introduced into the world, as a mirror to reflect its character upon the eye of faith. Scarcely less important is the advantage which it derives from the attestation to its efficacy, afforded in the life of every believer who has made it "the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation." That it has realized so little of this advantage in its past history is a consequence of the mistakes which men have made in regard to its meaning and its purpose. We must give to its doctrines their just signification and their proper authority, if we would behold its triumphs or promote its interests. Exceptions there have always been to the prevalent judgment respecting its character; nor has the Gospel, under the various constructions put upon it, been in general dispensed from unfaithful hands by those who have exercised the ministerial functions in its behalf. In the place where we now stand, has been seen, through successive ministries, a rare union of a right

conception and a right practice, — the example of a sound interpretation of the symbolic language of Christianity, held and used as the means of conveying its spiritual forces into the soul. The preacher at the last Ordination service for which this people invited the presence of their brethren invoked the favor of Heaven to grant that "the influences of a Christian ministry" such as "had been felt for years" might "be long enjoyed here." That prayer has had ample fulfilment. In substantial, if not literal, accordance with the view that has now been taken of the preacher's office, this religious society has been instructed in Christian truth by one, who, from year to year, has consistently shown himself "a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto" he has more and more "attained." What more suitable petition can we offer for the brother who now steps into a place fragrant with the influence of such examples, than that he may imitate those examples and perpetuate that influence? Under singularly bright auspices does he enter upon his work. The encouragements, as well as the results, of past ministries are before him, — their best encouragement to be found in the character of their results; but yet farther justification of a fond hope may he draw from the length of time through which those ministries have extended, and the harmony with which they have been marked in the relations between pastor and people. We congratulate him on the opportunities of usefulness and happiness which fill his prospect of the future. We leave him amidst the associations of this pulpit as the pledges of his success; since, when we part from him, our best wish

for his career can be but a reflection of our remembrance of what has already made the South Parish in Portsmouth an example and a standard with its sister congregations.

CHARGE.

BY REV. E. E. HALE.

It is very easy, on an occasion like this, to address, to one who stands where you stand, a charge which is discouraging, if not overwhelming. One has only to recall his own failures and omissions in a ministry of twenty years, and to repeat the list of them to the candidate, contrasting what he has himself done with what he wishes he had done; he has only to charge his young friend not to make those mistakes or be guilty of those follies, — and this alone makes a charge which even an archangel might stagger under. And there is, I think, a proneness to such an exaggeration, resulting from two or three causes. In the profession of the ministry, we are naturally enough inclined to magnify our office; and it happens that our office is the only calling, which, even in its essence, can boast of infinite range and infinite relations. The Christian ministry is, in its very nature, based on theology; and theology is the science of God, who is All in all. Theology is, therefore, an infinite science: it is the only infinite science. The man who enters upon it may press his inquiries in any direction, and the man who describes it has infinite field for illustration in his descriptions. So much license have we for stating the requisitions of the profession which is built upon it, in what I have called an exaggerated strain. The community at large, I believe, assists in such exaggeration. There is a careless habit of supposing that

every man in the ministry can do, and should do, what every other minister does; that there is no division of labor in the profession; that our training enables us to write, to speak, or to act rapidly, though superficially, perhaps, in every contingency; and that, in short, a well-trained minister is a man who can fill up, at a moment's notice, any unexpected gap, which no one else is willing to fill.

We contribute to this popular error in the pietistic exaggeration of our own language. Men will quote to you St. Paul as authority that you are equal to all this varied and overwhelming requisition, if only you drink at the true fountain. "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me," he says. But I beg you to observe, my friend, that this phrase is no such sweeping generality, but is really marked by all Greek accuracy and all Paul's precision. Paul does not say, in the sweeping phrase of our modern requisitions, that he can do every thing at once, even with that infinite assistance. With that assistance he can purify the debauchery of Corinth, working as a minister-at-large; or he can silence a Jewish mob by the magic of his eloquence; or he can make Felix tremble by reasoning of righteousness; or, by his presence in the throne-chamber, he can arrest the persecuting hand of Nero. All these things he can do through Christ's strengthening him. But he does one of them at one time, and another at another. He does not attempt at the same time to purify Corinth, to tame Jerusalem, to convert Felix, and to move Nero.

My charge to you, then, is, that, in your own estimate of your profession, you avoid this easy and superficial exaggeration. I charge you to remember, that you are only one of the children to whom God has intrusted the subduing of his world. Do your share like a man; but do not think that all the shares are yours. On the received computation, there are about a thousand million other children of his, living at this moment, who will divide with you the duty. That is the

army of the living God. If it pleased him to arrange it in a million regiments, and they marched swiftly by us here, night after day, year after year, they would be near sixty years in passing us. You and I would be in our graves long before the host of their survivors would have gone by. Do not let us arrogate to ourselves more than our share of the work of all. I charge you to seek the strictest concentration in selecting your duties and in fulfilling them; and the directions which I am to give you now are simply so many suggestions as to the way in which you can practically insure such concentration.

1. I charge you to remember that it is a ministry to which you are ordained this day; that it is a Christian ministry; and that it is the Christian ministry of this parish. Each of these considerations very materially concentrates the direction of your efforts. Because you are ordained to a ministry, every thing you do must be of service to somebody. All those occupations fall out from your life, which tend merely to the filling-up of time or to the enlargement of your own reputation. For instance, your preaching here must aim to be of use to somebody. That requisition excludes at once all "sensation preaching," all sentimental preaching, all controversial preaching, as we have heard, though by no means all doctrinal preaching. It excludes almost all occasional preaching, and all definitions of your own position. Again: you are not only to be of service to other men, but you are to render them Christian service; and that is to be such Christian service as the special minister of this parish has to render. You will not be here a month, before you will be urged to render other services, — to the State of New Hampshire, to the town of Portsmouth, to your nearest neighbors, and to the ends of the earth, — services to people who are selling histories of the war, and to people who are selling maps of Jerusalem. But I charge you, that you have no right to attend to any of these ministrations until you have

thoroughly adjusted your position as the Christian minister of this parish, have found what it demands of you, and are sure that you are devoting yourself in the best way to the fulfilment of its demands. To that position you are this day commissioned, as distinctly as Gen. M'Clellan is commissioned to the command of the army of the Potomac; and you have as little right to turn from your special ministry, before you have adjusted yourself to its demands, to either of those minor ministries, which, as I have said, will be urged upon you, as that great leader has to turn from his position of the hour.

2. I charge you as the minister of this parish. Because you are a Congregational minister, you will attempt to make the parish itself co-operate in the ministration which is demanded. In the Congregational theory, it is the parish, and not the clergyman only, which is the successor of Christ, and has to keep his work alive. I charge you to stimulate the ministering activity of your people; to remind them, and to remember yourself, that you are all together ministers of the gospel. If we were Roman Catholics, or if we were Episcopalians, I should give you no such charge; for the Roman Church holds, and the Episcopalian Church follows it where it is consistent, that the clergy has authority over the theology of the laity, and, to a certain extent, is also the keeper of their consciences. But we make no such claim. We do not "have dominion over the faith" of these who call us; but "we are helpers of their joy." By rightly dividing the work of the ministration of the gospel among these, your fellow-workers in the gospel, you do just so much to secure the concentration, which, as I have said, is to be your constant aim.

3. To secure this concentration, and to give efficiency to their co-operation, I charge you to take complete control, even from the beginning, of the division and use of your own time. Do not let even the cordial hospitalities and

courtesies of this people break in upon the arrangement of hours which you yourself determine is the most effective. I should advise you to begin to-morrow, even in the midst of the diversions and temptations of your first days here, upon a systematic division of the day, to be controlled entirely by yourself, and not to be changed at any suggestion of temporary or exceptional advantages.

4. All these charges suppose force of will, on your part, sufficient to carry out your determinations; and lastly, therefore, and chiefly, I charge you, that, to secure the concentration we demand, you work with an entire concentration of motive. There is but one simple motive: I charge you to work for that, and for that alone. You came into the Christian ministry that you might advance God's work and do his will. Remain in it for that purpose, and for no other. Every morning's question for you is to be this: "What does God want done, this day, which I can best do?" Ask that question; find the answer, and do that thing. Really, you have nothing more to do with your efforts of yesterday, or the day before yesterday. If you have repented of their sins as you should have done, you may then forget completely those things behind, as you press forward to those that are before; and, when night comes again, your only question is, "Have I tried to serve God to-day, or have I had other plans in view?" With such simplicity of motive, the concentration which is so essential is possible. Without it, it is impossible, — impossible, if you are seeking the praise of men more than the praise of God. I charge you, therefore, to hold in check our natural craving for our friends' applause. I know that I might more fitly speak, in private, of the details of such advice; but I will say, even here, that, in learning to rise above the criticism of men, no personal habit is trivial. I advise you to try to become "thick-skinned." I advise you, for instance, never to read an anonymous letter. I advise you to train yourself to parry compliments, and to

turn the conversation into a more profitable line. I advise you never to ask what people say of you, — never to think that they are looking at you. Indeed, I assure you that they talk of you much less, look at you much less, and think of you much less, than, in young life, young men are apt to suppose.

But I am apt to bring into one injunction all the advice I have to give to a young minister. The whole thing amounts to this, I believe: Do not try to use influence before you have got it; but, when you have got it, do not be afraid to use it. If you work with a single aim for the special purposes which God here points out to you, do not fear want of power; for you have his strength made perfect in your weakness. When you have that power, do not shrink from using it; for he is ready to give you the victory.

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

BY REV. C. Y. DE NORMANDIE.

My dear Brother, — The formal setting apart to the work to which you have already consecrated yourself, and given your fresh young life, has now taken place; and you wait for the usual welcome into the Christian brotherhood. You wait for the assurance of fellowship from this household of faith.

Granting to the ties of blood a privilege that is usually determined by geographical position, your desire and these brethren have assigned to me this pleasant duty. In the name of the churches gathered here to-day, I offer you that assurance; and, as you enter the "field white to the harvest," would cordially extend to you this right hand of Christian fellowship. Accept it in the faith in which it is given: and, believe me, it is only a pledge of the sympathy that is extended to you as you enter upon your untried work; an expression of a heartfelt desire for your abundant success in the profession which is henceforth to claim your time and strength and vital energies. With many memories of the past, and many hopes for the future, which we hold in common, I need not say that I have looked forward with the most intense interest to this time, which is to open to you a professional life of which I know something already; with whose trials and joys, vexations and blessed sympathies, my past experience has made me somewhat acquainted. Trained by the same home-influences, watched over by the same

love, shaped in our being's aim and end by the wise counsels of the parents who are here to-day witnessing the solemnities of this hour, and who hope and pray for the fulfilment of this day's prophecy, I welcome you to the office of a Christian teacher and pastor.

Glad as I should be to receive you at any time as a fellow-laborer in the "ministry of reconciliation," yet am I especially so now, when we are writing our history so fast, living a year in a day, and crowding the events of a generation or a century into a year; now, when passing through a baptism of blood, we hope to a national regeneration; now, when the forces of evil are so active, so on the alert, that it will require all the moral force of the gospel to combat them successfully, and preserve to us our moral integrity, and quicken in us, as a people, a spiritual life. In such an hour, you are ready to gird yourself for your life-service; and I congratulate you, that, so soon, a field ample and broad enough to try your largest powers, and tax to the utmost your capabilities, has opened before you. But, glad and cordial as is my greeting to you as pastor of *this* people, it is not so much to your position *here* that I heartily welcome you, as it is to the profession that opens before you such a boundless field for the exercise of the divinest charities of life, and gives you such ample opportunities for the cultivation of the best powers and noblest affections of our common nature. The promise of this day to you is, not of "ease and aimless quiet," but of abundant labor. The office of the Christian ministry is no sinecure, but one that brings with it wearying days of labor, and long and tedious nights of exhausting study; days and nights in which I fear you may often tire *in* the work, though I hope you may never grow weary *of* it; days and nights that trace the lines of care and anxiety prematurely on the face, and shake, even to their very foundations, these "clayey tabernacles." It is no light task, therefore, that is laid upon you.

I am glad to accept you as a fellow-laborer in this work, the chief object of which is to bless, to enlighten the ignorant, and to raise up the tasked and burdened heart of humanity.

This sublime aim of the Christian ministry is accomplished best, not when the teachers of religion regard Christianity as a *form of worship* or as a *system of faith*, but when they receive it as a body of great principles; a divine, vital, and inspiring force. This, more than all else, is what quickens the dry bones of the best theology the world ever knew, and clothes them with flesh, and breathes into them the breath of life. This can make the poorest and most meagre form or ceremonial instinct with life; and, without this, the grandest ceremonial is barren and unfruitful, the most devoted and self-sacrificing labor is productive of no large and lasting results. It has been said, that, "when speech is given to a soul holy and true as was Christ's, *time* and its dome of ages become as a mighty whispering-gallery, round which the imprisoned utterance runs and reverberates for ever;" and it is true. But when that word is made flesh, and dwells among us, "filled with grace and truth," it becomes one of the vital forces of the universe, moving the deep heart of the world; and only as you embody the principles of Christianity in your own life, and breathe its spirit in your daily walk, maintaining your freedom, and doing a manly work in a manly way, can you expect success in the Christian ministry.

But I welcome you not only as minister, but as one who is to sustain more intimate and dearer relations to the people of your charge as friend and pastor. In times of great joy or overwhelming sorrow, when sore calamities visit these households or heavy afflictions fall upon them, you will be brought very near to these hearts, and your ready sympathy will share with them their sorrows; your Christian faith will point them to the light that streams down upon the world

through the clouds and darkness that surround the divine presence. Very blessed it is to be permitted to witness the patient endurance of the uncomplaining sufferer in a sick chamber, where spirit is refined through suffering; where the heart is perfected through agony; where the soul is drawn near to God through the cross it has to bear; where the *child* is approaching the *Father* through pain and a discipline that tries its faith: for —

> "The chamber where the good man meets his fate
> Is privileged beyond the common walk
> Of virtuous life; quite on the verge of heaven."

And blessed it is to be permitted to commune with the heart of bleeding love that bends in sorrow over the couch of the best beloved, soon to be no more of earth, but which looks up, and, with the eye of faith undimmed by the tears which stream like rain from beneath the lids, blesses Him who gave and who now calls home his own.

Yet these privileges bring with them responsibilities grave and sacred, and duties more trying, perhaps, than can be found in any other profession. In the brightness of this hour, then, I would have you anticipate the griefs that sooner or later visit all hearts; and by a ready sympathy, a wise and *Christian faith*, and an intimate acquaintance with the heart of man, seek to prepare yourself to be a "son of consolation."

Strive to be able to touch those springs that will give healing and comfort to the wounded and sad. Great is the privilege to be permitted to say, that these "afflictions, that endure but for a moment, work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" to assure bleeding hearts, that nothing can separate them from the love of God, — "neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord;" but that all the discipline of life *may*, and, rightly received, *will*, unite them

in firmer and more living ties to God, the universal Father. And there are other scenes, happy and joyous, when homes are blessed and the cup of happiness overflows, in which you will participate; for which it is a privilege of no common order to render thanks to the Giver of all good. The *old* will look to you as the strength of their declining years, and those in the prime and vigor of life will look to you as friend and counsellor. Children, in their freshness and innocence, will expect your sympathy and blessing: they will look to you, not only as official teacher, but as spiritual guide. Let your intercourse with them be frank and tender and genial. Never dampen youthful ardor, but direct it; and so win their confidence, that you can lead their young steps in the way of spiritual life. I can wish you no higher joy than is born of this work; I can ask for you no more blessed reward than that which attends fidelity in this sacred labor. I heartily bid you God speed as I again welcome you, as you enter with the freshness of youth and the vigor of manhood upon your life-work.

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

BY REV. GEORGE W. BRIGGS, D.D.

THE proper service for the day is ended. At least, I am sure, that after what you have already heard with such an intent, absorbing interest, you can scarcely welcome any added words. Pardon me that a "necessity is laid upon me" to attempt to preach a brief gospel to you also.

The theory of an address to the people sometimes seems to be to endeavor to portray the shortcomings and the faults of parishioners in the boldest colors, and to rebuke them in sharp and even sarcastic speech. But a man seldom has that accurate knowledge of the parish to which he speaks which will qualify him to draw up an indictment with sufficient exactness to insure conviction; and no man would wish to expose himself to the suspicion of rebuking the faults of his own people under the guise of an address to another. If the lash is to be applied at all for such things, let it be used at home. Besides, whenever I undertake to prefer charges against parishioners, I am led to the conclusion, that I have few grievances, after all, to recount; few wrongs to rebuke. Indeed, the first thing which I wish to do is to bear emphatic testimony — out of an experience far longer than I wish it was, as I think of the small results which it seems to have accomplished — to the general and honorable fidelity of parishioners towards their minister. They will not always go to the church twice in the day; as I think they should, while they demand that he should speak there twice. Many of them

will not give themselves to a religious life as he labors and longs to have them. He will find many foibles, many delinquencies, in the course of years. I have known inconsiderate parishioners given to causeless jealousies at fancied slights; quick to take offence; with David's indignation when the pulpit exercises its God-given right of exposing and rebuking private or public sins, but without David's penitence. But these things are often like spots upon the sun, unperceived amidst the brightness of the love that shines upon his daily path. When I think of the general spirit of confidence and love that so often surrounds a minister like an atmosphere; of the deference with which the old, whose feet may be far up the heavenly hills, listen to his far less mature, even to his youthful speech; of the affection which is ready to gush out towards him, from hundreds of hearts, with eager, perpetual flow; or when I think of the patient, persistent kindness which — if a ministry in a particular parish chance to be ended, so that it can be looked back upon as a whole — causes it to lie in the memory as beautiful and bright as the days of childhood, except for the sense of his own shortcomings and deficiencies, — I feel that nothing but grateful, profound, unbroken acknowledgments become his lips. The times are doubtless greatly changed. As the new wine must be put into new bottles, so the new life of to-day must have new modes of expression. But New England has not yet ceased to cherish and love its ministers: this parish, certainly, has not ceased to love them. Perhaps, if this general love even now so greatly outweighs other things, a little more of devotion and single-heartedness in the minister himself will turn the balance farther still, till the opposite scale shall touch the beam.

I have no keen fault-findings to bring to you to-day. Doubtless, if I were intimately acquainted with your individual lives, I might find many things open to criticism or rebuke. Possibly there may be some niggardly parishioner here, who

is more ready to compel his minister to economize than to economize himself; or some dull spirit, whose normal condition is sleep, and who will wonder if his minister does not work a miracle upon him, and keep him habitually awake; some meddlesome or complaining man, who always interposes difficulties, or whose usual speech is censure. Perhaps these or other types of character exist among you, whose portraits deserve to be drawn with such distinctness, that their originals should stand exposed, and it could be said to each in turn, "Thou art the man!" But you will pardon me for saying, that this seems to me a place in which many of the reproofs and many of the counsels, usually given to parishes on occasions like this, ought to be, and must be, unnecessary. Trained under such ministries as that of him whom I never saw, but whose character was so often held up as a model, and who seemed to realize in so high a degree the idea of a saintly service;* and of your late pastor, whose name is in all our churches,—you must have learned to love and cherish your religious teacher. If such influences have failed to insure good parishioners, no words of mine will help you. Can any thing more be necessary than to stir up your minds by way of remembrance, so that you may take our young brother into your heart of hearts, as you took and cherished those who have preceded him?

Let me charge you, first, to make it your fixed, life-long resolve to do what you can to help him in his work. His predecessor has consecrated him to that work to-day in solemn prayer. That prayer, I doubt not, was echoed and re-echoed through all the depths of his spirit, in a self-consecration, which, though inaudible to you, was heard by the ear of God. Is it not right to say, that you should consecrate yourselves to him as truly as he consecrates himself to you? You are to be co-workers now. Resolve to help him where you can.

---

* Rev. Dr. Parker.

Perhaps there are parish services that you can render, actual burdens of duty, which, instead of refusing to lift with one of your fingers, you can generously take upon your own shoulders. Take every thing that you can. No enumeration of particulars will cover all the possibilities of service; but if the purpose to help your minister is true and living, like the Spirit of God in its chosen hearts, it will teach you, every hour, what to do and to say.

And my present charge reaches those who cannot help him by actual work. Not a man or woman or child among you can escape it. If the apparent contradiction of statement may be permitted, those who only indirectly aid a minister often help him more than those who directly relieve him from actual duties. The universal sympathy of a people; the assurance that they are intent to listen, ready to appreciate his every effort; that, if they have high ideals of a minister's work, they have equally high ideals for themselves, and look to him for help to make these real in life, — will do more to quicken, more to inspire, than the positive services which but few of you can render. If the inspiration of a true minister must come first directly from the Spirit of God working within him, it may come also from the true spirit of a people breathing around him and upon him. With frail men, this second inspiration may be as powerful as the first. You wish to have your minister become an effective, living preacher: do your part to make him so. A man will be ashamed to bring husks to men and women hungering for the bread of life. When a man lives among a people who have low, unspiritual aims, to whom worship is a form, he is in peril of losing his own high faith and his power. Then his higher life may gradually die out of his heart. Enkindle your minister's soul by the fire from your loving, eager, listening eyes. Nerve and hold up his hands, unseal his tongue, call forth all his powers of persuasive and eloquent speech, by thus encouraging and quickening his heart. You can

scarcely realize what a constant blessing and help even one good parishioner is to a minister. I have one such in my memory, a calm, wise, yet earnest man, whose perpetual, living interest stirred every languid power of thought, and stimulated every faculty to its highest endeavors. Before such a man, the soul brings forth its choicest treasures as naturally as love offers its best gifts to those to whom it clings. He little thought, as he sat Sunday after Sunday with such reverent attention, that, if any living word chanced to be spoken from the pulpit, it was greatly due to the inspiration of his constant presence, and to the idea that it would fall upon his listening ear. There should be such parishioners here. Come with such open, earnest, waiting minds. Let our brother feel that he speaks to such a sympathizing audience, and I will utter nothing but congratulations to *him* upon his entrance into the midst of such inspiring influences, and nothing but congratulations to *you* on account of the double energy which they will give to his every word and service.

But while you are eager, intent to listen to your minister's words, let me charge you, in the second place, to be moderate in your expectations. Your minister is a young man. Do not try him by the high standards which can only be realized in the full development of experience and of genius. On a late ordination occasion, it was said with equal wisdom and force, "There are great advantages in having a young man for a minister, and there are great advantages in having an old man for a minister; but it is impossible to have both a young man and an old man in the same person." Perhaps a parish, which has been favored with such distinguished services in its former ministers as this, particularly needs the charge, not to be exacting in its expectations. Do not alarm and dishearten your minister by disparaging comparisons with his predecessors. Let him feel, that while you keep their memory green, as he will long to have you always, you put your hands in his to-day with single heart. I think that our

parishes, especially in our larger towns, may need a caution against exaggerated demands in respect to the services of the pulpit to-day. By the lecture system of the time, many communities are electrified every year by the eloquence of the masters of speech; and the sermon which must be furnished each successive week, is, consciously or unconsciously, matched against the discourse which may be the matured product of months. When the comet flashes across the sky, men are apt to overlook the unobtrusive star, though it shine with steady light; yes, even though it would go before them to the place where the young child is laid. Be not guilty of depreciating the sermon because it does not surpass the lecture. Judge leniently of all its possible deficiencies. You cannot feel them more keenly or regret them more sincerely than the minister himself. Unless he is a miracle of strength or of self-sufficiency and folly, he will go to the pulpit burdened with an overwhelming sense of incompetency to give fitting expression, in human speech, to divine, eternal truth. He will often go with the oppressive conviction, that he is not half himself, through transient dulness of the spirit; and scarcely dare to look in the faces of those whom he so poorly serves: much less will he feel that he is really charged with a burden of the Lord which he can speak with burning lips. Do not add to this trial by your inconsiderate judgments and exacting criticisms. Do not flatter your minister, unless you would awaken his contempt; but encourage him, when you honestly can, by your kindly appreciation; and thus put new courage in the place of self-distrust.

Judge leniently of your minister's sermons also, if they do not always touch the depths of experience. The most effective and living sermons, doubtless, are those which are written out of the deeps of the preacher's life. Thrilling experiences come fast with the hurrying years; but they will not come fast enough to enable him to make every discourse a living word in that sense of the term. Let me charge you, then,

once more and briefly, to strive to help your minister by unsealing to him the book of your own lives. When you see him in your homes, open to him your questionings, your doubts, your unbeliefs, your spiritual experience just as it is. Do not be ashamed of your serious thoughts as some men are; do not be ashamed of your difficulties. I wish, that, without the formality and the superstition of the confessional, we could have the unveiling of the heart which realizes its true ideal. Then pastoral intercourse would be no longer a form, but a fact. The minister would need no entreaty to bring him near you. He would long to repeat his communion with the souls that opened to him in beautiful frankness. Then, too, he might find themes sure to meet present, urgent wants, — themes to which he would seem to be summoned by the direct providence of the living God. Then his sermons would not be generalities, but the direct application of truth to living hearts,—words which, in their adaptation to living souls, may have something of that influence attending the speech of Him whose "word was with power." The physician of souls can never heal you, unless you permit him to see the spiritual diseases under which you suffer. Let him see them as they are; and God may guide him to the remedy, that, like the touch of the Lord, will make you whole.

These desultory words must cease. I have not sought to admonish you respecting many things often named; I have not charged you respecting your pecuniary obligations to your minister: for you are honest business-men to take care to fulfil them; and you are Christian men to be not only just towards him, but generous. I have not charged you to leave him free to act as a man, or to speak as a minister: for you will be courteous as *gentlemen*, as well as open-minded as inquirers, and allow him all the rights which you claim for yourselves; remembering always that he, too, is a man. Let these secondary duties go. I charge you to fulfil the great duty of giving him your love; for "love is the ful-

filling of the whole law." Give him your hearts, and you will steadfastly work to take every thorn out of his path. Give him your hearts truly, and you will not be intrusive or selfish even in your affection, but each will steadfastly remember that hundreds of other hearts have equal claim upon his service. Give him your hearts with a genuine sympathy for his work, and you will come to his public services in a spirit that will make them a perpetual blessing. We have long been busy in destroying external helps to religious impression. The idea of the special sacredness of the minister's office, of the day on which he speaks, of the altar itself, has already faded, or is rapidly fading, out of the public mind. So much the more must the worshippers strive to come with an intentness, a consecration, which will more than compensate for the lost impression of the sanctity once associated with the sabbath, the rite, the priest. Do not put upon your minister the double burden of first creating the right frame of mind, and then of meeting it, and thus compel him to do both your own work and his; but see to it that you gather here habitually, humbly, lovingly, devoutly, and you will not only be faithful to your own obligation to your minister, but do more than I can tell you to make his speech, spirit, and life a perpetual and baptismal fire.

We live in an hour in which our principles are sternly tested. We are called to a heroism and to sacrifices which it needs all the strength of faith to inspire and to meet. At such an hour, we feel the need of leaning on the Almighty Arm. When the deeps of the heart are opened, we need to hear His voice who can bid its deeps be still. Every rightly judging man, I think, must feel that religious faith was never more a reality or a necessity than now. God grant that your new minister may walk among you in brief days of war, in long years of peace, as an inspirer and comforter, as a true apostle of the one Master and Lord!

Order of Exercises

AT THE

ORDINATION OF MR. JAMES DE NORMANDIE,

IN PORTSMOUTH, N.H., OCT. 1, 1862.

VOLUNTARY AND ANTHEM.

INVOCATION.

BY REV. S. K. LOTHROP, D.D., OF BOSTON.

READING THE SCRIPTURES.

BY REV. H. W. FOOTE, OF BOSTON.

Isa. vi. 1–8. Jer. xxiii. 28, 29. 2 Cor. i. 24; ii. 17; iii. 4, 5, 6, 12; iv. 1–7. John xxi. 15–19.

HYMN.

O GOD! thy children gathered here,
Thy blessing now we wait:
Thy servant, girded for his work,
Stands at the temple's gate.

O Father! keep his soul alive
To every hope of good;
And may his life of love proclaim
Man's truest brotherhood!

O Father! keep his spirit quick
To every form of wrong;
And, in the ear of sin and self,
May his rebuke be strong!

And grant him many souls to lead
Into thy perfect rest:
Bless thou him, Father, and his flock;
Bless, and they shall be blest.

SERMON.

BY REV. EZRA S. GANNETT, D.D., OF BOSTON.

ORIGINAL HYMN.

Our fathers' God, whose guardian care
So long hath blessed this hallowed place,
From strife and care we turn to-day,
And seek for thy peculiar grace.

Another watchman takes his stand
Upon our Zion's holy tower:
Endue, O God! his youthful heart
With wisdom, watchfulness, and power.

Another shepherd comes to feed
His Master's flock with tender care:
Give Thou his Master's spirit, too,
Of patient love and humble prayer.

Another soldier lays his hand
Upon the consecrated sword;
And grasps, to lead thine armies forth,
The glorious banner of the Lord.

Prepare him for his holy war
With armor of thy spirit's might,
With faith and zeal to meet thy foes;
Fearless for freedom and for right.

Oh! grant, that, though in stormy hour
Our pastor and our guide be given,
Our path may yet lead forth to light,
Through peace on earth, to bliss in heaven.

ORDAINING PRAYER.

BY REV. A. P. PEABODY, D.D., OF CAMBRIDGE.

CHARGE.

BY REV. E. E. HALE, OF BOSTON.

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

BY REV. C. Y. DE NORMANDIE, OF FAIRHAVEN.

ORIGINAL HYMN.

EACH morning new, and fresh at eve,
Father, thy grace impart,
And fervent consecration give,
To thy disciple's heart.

White unto harvest waits the field,
Young laborer, for thy care:
Thy toil with vigorous purpose yield,
And zeal sustained by prayer.

If viewless souls our pathway keep,
Thou wilt not walk alone:
The step of many saintly feet
Must fall beside thine own.

From humble fear what shadows frown,
Let steadfast faith dispel:
Who bends the bow above the storm
Doth set the cloud as well.

Spare not one truth : no human voice
Its utterance may cheer ;
But higher hymn of angel-joys
Shall bless thy listening ear.

Then new each morn, and fresh at eve,
Thy mercies, Lord, be given ;
And may this hour such record have
As wears the seal of heaven !

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

BY REV. GEORGE W. BRIGGS, D.D., OF SALEM.

CONCLUDING PRAYER.

BY REV. EUGENE DE NORMANDIE, OF LITTLETON.

DOXOLOGY.

BENEDICTION.

BY THE PASTOR.